



[Amílcar Cabral, 1924 - 1973](#)

## Introduction: Weapon of Theory

Next week we begin posting a ten-part course on African Revolutionary Writers. This will be the first of four ten-week courses to be run through this channel this year.

As usual, the CU brings a set of original texts, linked to a short introduction or “opening to discussion”. You are welcome to reply to the CU postings, continuing the

discussion, or adding your own new comments on the text.

As a suitable introduction to the new course, we link Amilcar Cabral's "Weapon of Theory" (link below).

Cabral is the most profound and the most sublime of African Revolutionary writers. He is one of those Africans who contributed indispensable new lessons to the universal revolutionary legacy. "The Weapon of Theory" is relevant to our course as a whole, and to all our courses, for that matter. At a later stage in this course we will return to Amilcar Cabral and to the great single-volume compendium of his work called "Unity and Struggle", recently republished in English in South Africa.

### **The Weapon of Theory**

The [Tricontinental Conference](#) of the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America was held in Havana in January, 1966, 46 years after the Baku [Conference of the Peoples of the East](#) and seven years after the Cuban Revolution.

Fifty more years have passed since the Tricontinental. A lot has been achieved in that time, including our South African democratic breakthrough, almost twenty-one years ago, and the unbanning of the ANC and the SACP, twenty-five years ago.

The full defeat of Imperialism has not yet occurred. What we can say is that from early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the historical agenda was set by the liberation movements,

and that Imperialism represents the degeneration and the decline of bourgeois class power, and not its heyday.

The great political change in the world in the last century was the taking of sovereign independence by the formerly oppressed peoples of the former colonies, affecting the great majority of the population of the planet, and opening the road of democracy for them.

This gigantic movement and huge change was achieved with **the weapon of theory**.

In 2015, with direct Imperialist armed aggression still taking place on the continent of Africa it is, however, clear that the struggle continues.

In this connection we can note that Amilcar Cabral, in the speech to the Tricontinental that has always been known by the title *“The Weapon of Theory”*, said the following:

*“It is often said that national liberation is based on the right of every people to freely control its own destiny and that the objective of this liberation is national independence. Although we do not disagree with this vague and subjective way of expressing a complex reality, we prefer to be objective, since for us the basis of national liberation, whatever the formulas adopted on the level of international law, is the inalienable right of every people to have its own history, and the objective of national liberation is to regain this right usurped by imperialism, that is to say, to free the*

*process of development of the national productive forces.*

*“For this reason, in our opinion, any national liberation movement which does not take into consideration this basis and this objective may certainly struggle against imperialism, but will surely not be struggling for national liberation.*

*“This means that, bearing in mind the essential characteristics of the present world economy, as well as experiences already gained in the field of anti-imperialist struggle, the principal aspect of national liberation struggle is the struggle against neo-colonialism.”*

Amilcar Cabral was a true vanguardist. He was both a great leader, and a great intellectual.

The struggle against neo-colonialism continues.

- [The Weapon of Theory](#) (PDF download)
- A PDF file of the reading text is attached
- To download the full African Revolutionary Writers course in PDF files, [please click here](#)